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ABSTRACT

The goal of the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse is to uphold the principles of the Library Bill of Rights in all types of libraries by improving communication between librarians, board members, professional associations, and other concerned groups in Oregon about challenges to intellectual freedom, and by increasing awareness as to how threats to intellectual freedom can be overcome. The data collection is limited to formal challenges to any type of library material in any type of Oregon library. A formal challenge is defined as a written "Request for Reconsideration" or "Statement of Concern" submitted by a group or individual to a library. Additional information is obtained from newspaper reports, if available. In a few instances, newspaper articles are the sole source of information about a challenge. The Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse received information about 47 challenges against library materials between July 1, 2000 and June 30, 2001. Thirty of the challenged titles were books, 12 were videotapes or DVDs, one was a compact disc, one was a magazine, two were books on tape, and one was a book/audio tape combination. Public libraries experienced 41 of the challenges and school libraries reported six challenges. Twenty-two of the challenges items were designated as children's or young adult materials, and 25 were materials for adults. In 46 of the challenges, library staff committees or a school board decided that the materials should be retained. Three of those items were reclassified to more accurately reflect the content and one of those items is not restricted to teacher use. One item was removed from a school library collection. For each item listed in this Fourteenth Annual Report, a summary of objections and a summary of events are provided. A statistical snapshot of the challenges reported since the inception of the Clearinghouse in May 1987 is then presented, followed by a 5-year overview of Clearinghouse data that analyzes the data in a graphic format. A final section identifies other intellectual freedom issues in Oregon in 2000-2001. (AEF)

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Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse

Fourteenth Annual Report

July 1, 2000 – June 30, 2001

Goal of the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse

The goal of the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse is to uphold the principles of the Library Bill of Rights in all types of libraries, by improving communication between librarians, board members, professional associations, and other concerned groups in Oregon about challenges to intellectual freedom, and by increasing awareness as to how threats to intellectual freedom can be overcome.

Objectives of the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse

To establish a central clearinghouse to collect and disseminate reports about challenges to intellectual freedom in all types of Oregon libraries.

To provide information about challenged materials to public library directors and library board members, school media center librarians and academic librarians when requests for reconsideration of materials are formally registered.

To provide information to public library directors and library board members, school media center librarians and academic librarians about establishing appropriate policies and procedures before a challenge to intellectual freedom occurs.

To cooperate with other persons and groups concerned with intellectual freedom or related issues.

Scope and Methodology of the Clearinghouse

The data collected is limited to formal challenges to any type of library material in any type of Oregon library. A formal challenge is defined here as a written "Request for Reconsideration" or "Statement of Concern" submitted by a group or individual to a library. The Clearinghouse will report informal (not written) challenges when such challenges are of interest because they have received significant public debate.

The Clearinghouse reports details about challenges as they are recorded on "Reconsideration Report" forms submitted by library or school staff, or occasionally by citizens. Reporting to the Clearinghouse is voluntary. Additional information is obtained from newspaper reports, if available. In a few instances, newspaper articles are the sole source of information about a challenge.

The *Fourteenth Annual Report* summarizes 47 challenges against library materials that took place between July 1, 2000 and June 30, 2001. The section, "Other Issues in Intellectual Freedom in Oregon in 2000-01," provides a brief synopsis of other issues concerning intellectual freedom that affected Oregon libraries during the reporting period. A five-year overview of Clearinghouse data (see section, The Charts) analyzes the data in a graphic format. "The Big Picture" provides a statistical snapshot of Clearinghouse data since its inception in May 1987.

It is possible to research challenges in Oregon libraries using the *Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse Index to Challenges* at the Oregon State Library website and the printed Annual Reports produced by the Clearinghouse. The *Title Index to Challenges* on the website will locate titles and the number of the *Annual Report* that includes the challenge. The Annual Reports themselves will yield more complete information, including a summary of objections. The website index is the source of the most current information. Beginning with the *9th Annual Report*, 1995-96, the reports are posted on theOregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse page of the Oregon State Library website. To obtain copies of *Annual Reports* prior to 1995-96, or in the print version, contact Val Vogt, Oregon State Library, at 503-378-2112, extension 222, or val.t.vogt@state.or.us.

Summary of Challenges Reported in 2000-01

The Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse received information about 47 challenges to library materials between July 1, 2000 and June 30, 2001. Thirty of the challenged titles were books, twelve were videotapes or DVDs, one was a compact disc, one was a magazine, two were books on tape and one was a book/audio tape combination. Public libraries experienced 41 of the challenges and school libraries reported six challenges. Twenty-two of the challenged items were designated as children's or young adult materials, and 25 were materials for adults. In 46 of the challenges, library staff committees or a school board decided that the challenged materials should be retained. Three of those items were reclassified to more accurately reflect the content and one of those items is now restricted to teacher use. One item was removed from a school library collection.

Fourteen challenges to material in 2000-01 concerned materials that were considered excessively violent or too scary for children. Concerns about material with sexual themes or overly graphic language were expressed in eleven requests for reconsideration. Three challenges concerned materials about witchcraft and the occult. Concern about homosexual content was expressed in four challenges. The fifteen challenges reported in the "other" category encompassed concerns which ranged from anti-family to disturbing illustrations to unsuitability for children.

The challenges listed below are organized according to library type, public or school, and arranged alphabetically by the title of the challenged material. Under the summary of events, the phrase "Staff review process" refers to adopted procedures by which library staff read or view the materials, collect reviews and other information about the material, and make the decision about the challenged item. This procedure is more common in public libraries. Generally, the library director writes a letter informing the library patron of the decision and explaining the appeals process, in case the citizen is not satisfied with the decision. The phrase "Committee review process" refers to adopted procedures by which a committee, such as an Instructional Materials Review Committee, makes the decision about the challenged item. This procedure is more common in schools. The school board, superintendent, or site council often makes the final decision based on a recommendation from the committee.

Challenges in Public Libraries

Bingo (Children's Video)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed that the video contains "violent and abusive subject matter."
Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained 2/8/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

The Blair Witch Project (Adult Video)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed over too much profanity.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained 11/4/00. Letter sent.
No further appeal filed.

Book of Shadows by Phyllis Curott. (Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about lack of merit and that material contains rituals and spells accessible to children.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 3/8/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Cherry Poppin' Daddies (Adult Compact Disc)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about name of musical group with several compact discs available at the library.
Summary of events: Staff review process. All CDs by group retained 3/16/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Clay Boy by Mirra Ginsburg (Children's Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about "violent and graphic nature of book."
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 11/20/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Cold Feet by Cynthia DeFelice (Children's Book)
Summary of objections: Two statements of concern submitted at different times by different people expressed concern that the book is disturbing for young children.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 1/23/01 and 5/15/01. Letters sent in both cases. No further appeal filed.

David (Adult Video)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about graphic and violent scenes.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 11/17/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Dr. Ruth Talks to Kids by Dr. Ruth Westheimer. (Children's Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about overly permissive stance on sexuality.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 10/5/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Dogs to the Rescue (Children's Video)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about "dark and scary content."
Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained 10/16/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Family Man (Adult Book on Tape)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about graphic sex.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book on tape retained 7/9/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Frank. Volume Two by Jim Woodring (Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about "showing body cutting and bleeding not related to the storyline."
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 10/16/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Gustav: Paranormal Investigator by Malcolm Bourne and Ken Meyer (Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about disturbing illustrations.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 12/29/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Hair in Funny Places by Babette Cole (Children's Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed that book is not appropriate for any age.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 2/27/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Henry of Atlantic City by Fredrick Reuss (Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about book being "anti-family, anti-church, anti-God."
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 1/2/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

In the Realm of the Senses (Adult Video)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about "pornographic" content.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained 7/7/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Johns (Adult Video)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about homosexual content.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained 2/26/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Kids (Adult Video)
Summary of objections: Concerned expressed about explicit sex and drug use.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained 8/21/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Lessons in Evil, Lessons from the Light by Gail Carr Feldman. (Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about book that "entices child sadists and murderers."
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 10/12/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Life Doesn't Frighten Me by Maya Angelou (Children's Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed that "biographical material included in book was not appropriate for children."
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book reclassified from Easy Non-Fiction to Juvenile Non-Fiction 8/8/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Little Miss Muffet and Other Nursery Rhymes by Lucy Cousins (Children's Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about "disturbing topic for children" in one rhyme.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 1/9/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Love and Rockets X by Gilbert Hernandez (Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about language and suggestiveness in material.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 9/1/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Love! Valour! Compassion! (Adult Video)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about homosexual content.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained 2/26/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Luba Conquers the World by Gilbert Hernandez (Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about graphic violence.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 7/3/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Michael Moorcock's Stormbringer by P. Craig Russell (Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about "comic book" on the subject of sexual abuse accessible to children.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 3/12/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Mommy Laid an Egg by Babette Cole (Children's Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about content inappropriate for children.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained in parenting collection 9/12/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Name Games by Michael Craft (Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about homosexual content.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 1/31/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Prophet by Frank E. Peretti (Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about anti-gay, anti-abortion material.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 1/31/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Rip City Magazine (Young Adult Magazine)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about beer ads.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Magazine moved to adult section 10/10/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Ripping Time by Robert Asprin (Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about children's access to "pornography."
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 7/20/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Satellite Down by Rob Thomas (Young Adult Book on Tape)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about language and explicit sex and requested listener age recommendation be changed.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book on tape retained in YA section 8/11/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

A Separate Reality, The Second Ring of Power, The Fire Within and others by Carlos Castaneda. (Adult Books)
Summary of objections: This was a request to reconsider previous Reconsideration Request of 3/19/99 and reclassify these titles out of religion.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Books retained in 299.7 section of library 8/29/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Silver (Children's Video)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about language contained in background music in video.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Video reclassified as Young Adult 1/11/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

The Story of Little Black Sambo by Helen Bannerman (Children's Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about "depiction of black people"; requested item be given non-fiction call number as historical item.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained as cataloged 9/1/00.
Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Summer of Sam (Adult Video)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about graphic sex.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained 1/10/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

There Ain't No Bugs On Me by Jerry Garcia and David Grisman (Children's Book/Tape)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about use of word "hell" on tape that is written as "heck" in book.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book/tape retained 9/1/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Swamp Thing (Adult Video)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about explicit sexual behavior and nudity.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained 11/10/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

The Tulip Touch (Children's Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about violence and cruelty.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 11/20/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

The Whole Lesbian Sex Book by Felice Newman (Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about explicit, graphic sexual descriptions.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 10/13/00. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Wicca 2000 by Patricia Telesco (Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed that material "containing rituals and spells was checked out by juvenile who was extremely influenced by it."
Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 3/8/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

The Wild Bunch (Adult Video)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about violence.
Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained 7/11/01. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Challenges in School Libraries

Dream Boy (Young Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about homosexual content, drinking and graphic language.
Summary of events: Committee review process. Removed from use 6/12/01.

The Golden Compass by Philip Pullman (Children's/Young Adult Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about "demon possession and satanic practices."
Summary of events: Committee review process. Recommendation to School Board to retain without restriction. School Board approved Committee recommendation 7/11/01.

I Saw Esau edited by Iona and Peter Opie (Children's Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed that illustrations are "disgusting, inappropriate, and/or unnecessary."
Summary of events: Committee review process. School Board retained book with use restricted to teachers 7/11/01.

Janey's Girl by Gayle Friesen (Children's Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed that book is too mature for elementary audience.
Summary of events: Retained via School District Review procedure 3/01.

The Lottery by Shirley Jackson (Young Adult Short Story)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed about "morbid and grotesque idea portrayed."
Summary of events: Committee review process. School Board approved Committee recommendation to retain without restriction 3/13/01.

Thomas' Snowsuit by Robert Munsch (Children's Book)
Summary of objections: Concern expressed that material is contrary to District's behavior policies.
Summary of events: Committee Review process. School Board approved committee recommendation to retain without restriction 1/9/01.

The Big Picture: A Fourteen Year Overview

The following is a statistical snapshot of the challenges reported since the inception of the Clearinghouse in May 1987. The total number of challenges was 496, of which 360 (73%) were in public libraries and 136 (27%) in school libraries. 297 (60%) of these challenges were to materials designated for children or young adults and 199 (40%) were for adult materials. Objections to the content of library materials fell into the following categories: scary or violent content, 96 (19%) challenges; graphic sexual content or explicit language, 179 (36%) challenges; witches or occult themes, 57 (12%) challenges; homosexual content, 65 (13%) challenges; and other concerns, 99 (20%) challenges. Library materials were retained in 430 of the challenges (87%) reclassified 18 times (3%); restricted 20 times (4%); replaced 3 times (1%); and removed 25 times (5%).

In order to ensure sound data, we invite every library in Oregon to report all challenges to intellectual freedom. We have posted information about the Clearinghouse, the information request form, the reconsideration report form and other intellectual freedom resources on the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse page of the Oregon State Library website at http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/oifch.html. You may also contact Clearinghouse Coordinator, MaryKay Dahlgreen, at 503-378-2112 ext. 239 or marykay.dahlgreen@state.or.us.

The Charts: A Five-Year Overview

The following is an overview of the last five years of challenges to library materials in Oregon, based on the data reported since July 1, 1996.

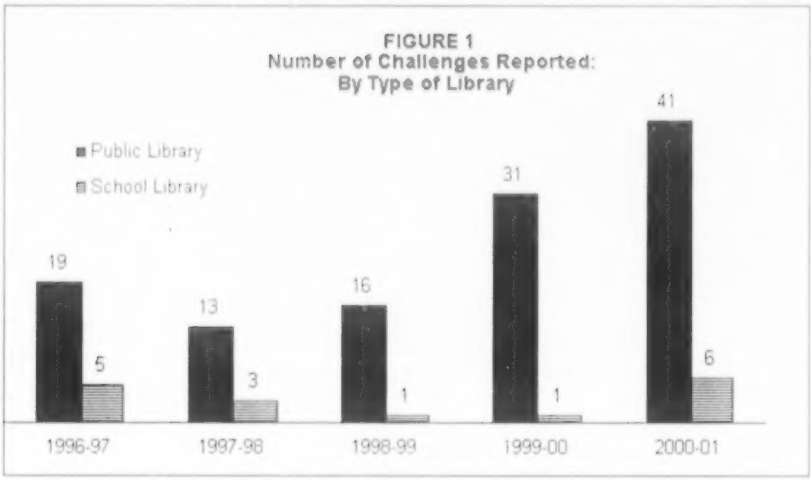

Figure 1 illustrates the number of challenges in public libraries and the number of challenges in school libraries. Over five years, the Clearinghouse collected information about 120 challenges to public library materials, and 15 challenges to school library materials.

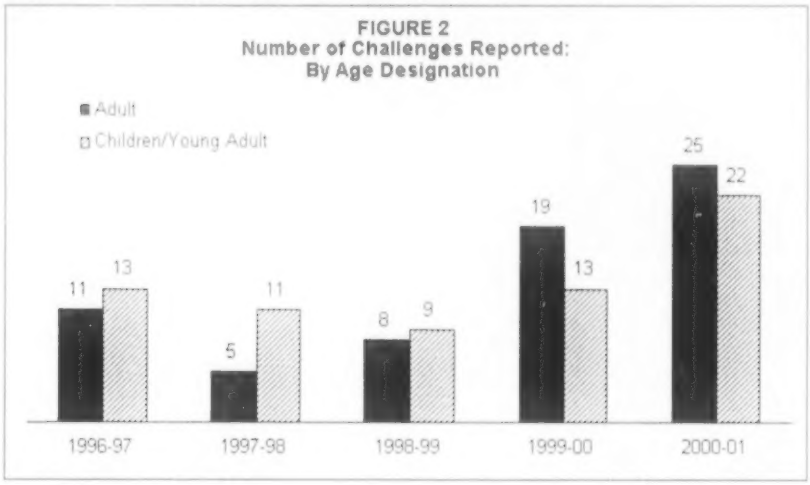

Figure 2 illustrates whether materials challenged each year were for children and young adults or for adults. In the past, citizens have challenged materials designated for children and young adults more than materials for adults. However, 1999-00 shows an increase in challenges to materials designated for adults, as did 2000-01.

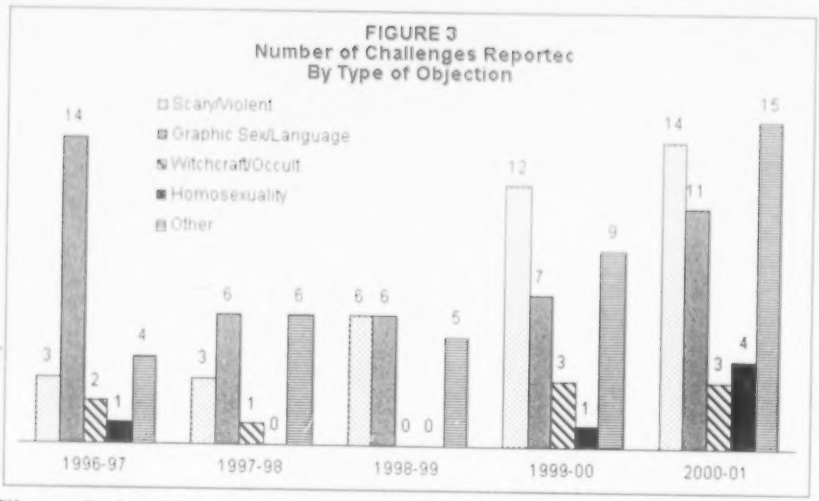

Figure 3 classifies the objections to materials submitted each year into broad categories. Often multiple objections are cited against materials but the chart indicates only one major objection for each challenge. The chart illustrates the varying predominance of either challenges about graphic sexual content and language or challenges about the scary or violent nature of some materials. There are a growing number of challenges (designated "other") that do not fit neatly into the established categories.

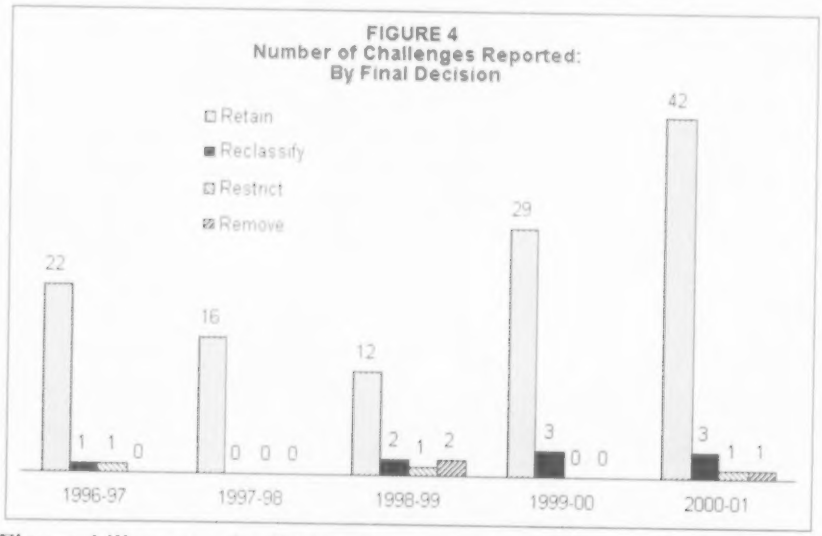

Figure 4 illustrates the final outcome of each challenge: whether the materials were retained without restriction in each library, reclassified to a different age group or subject section in the library, restricted to a certain age group or restricted to access only with parental permission, replaced with a similar item on the same subject or a new edition of the same title, or removed from the library. Over the years most materials have been retained on library shelves with no restriction.

Other Intellectual Freedom Issues in Oregon in 2000-01

In addition to the official challenges to library materials reported here, there have been several challenges to curriculum materials that were either reported to the Clearinghouse or in local Oregon newspapers. In the West Linn-Wilsonville School District a parent challenged the use of *Ricochet River* by Robin Cody

(an Oregon author) as one of four books that students may choose to read in 12th grade English. The School Board decided to retain the book for use in 12th grade English.

Local newspapers reported challenges to curriculum materials in the Greater Albany School District and the Springfield School District. In Albany, *Kaffir Boy* by Mark Mathabane was taken off the required reading list of the 10th grade Advanced Placement English class after a parent complained that it contained graphic sex. In Springfield, a parent requested that *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson be removed from a fifth-grade classroom. A Materials Challenge Committee voted to continue to allow use of the book as supplemental curriculum at the elementary level.

At the national level, the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Neighborhood Internet Protection Act (NCIPA) went into effect on April 20, 2001. These new laws place restrictions on the use of funding that is available through the Library Services and Technology Act, Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and on the Universal Service telecommunications discount program known as the E-rate (Public Law 106-554). These restrictions take the form of requirements for Internet safety policies and technology which blocks or filters certain material from being accessed through the Internet. On March 20, 2001 the American Library Association filed suit against the U.S. Government, challenging the constitutionality of the federal law. On July 27, 2001 a three judge panel denied the U.S. Government's motion to dismiss the suit. The District Court trial is set for February 14, 2002. For more information about CIPA see http://www.ala.org/cipa. In February of 2001 the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners authorized the Multnomah County Library to enter into the lawsuit. Information from the Multnomah County Library CIPA Questions & Answers web page, http://www.multnomah.lib.or.us/lib/news/cipa.html, states
"The Multnomah County Library Board believes decisions about how to offer public access to the Internet should be made at the local, not the federal, level… County attorneys and library staff will spend time answering questions and providing information about the lawsuit. However, Multnomah County will not finance the actual litigation."

The Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse would like to track all intellectual freedom challenges in libraries, including those relating to the Internet. We are encouraging libraries to communicate with us about concerns and challenges that you receive. Contact MaryKay Dahlgreen, Clearinghouse Coordinator, <marykay.dahlgreen@state.or.us> or 503-378-2112 ext. 239.

Our thanks to Val Vogt at the Oregon State Library for her assistance with data organization and reviews about materials, to Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association for underwriting a portion of the cost of printing the 14th Annual Report and to Media Weavers for printing and including the *Annual Report* in the Fall issue of Writers NW.